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AUTHOR Jongewaard, Steve
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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses an emerging unification theory of multiculturalism and global education called "transcultural universalism." The paper considers a "universal citizenship profile," of what it consists, and how it is formed. The paper asks four questions: (1) What key citizenship characteristics are essential for today's highly diverse, complex classrooms? (2) What can we draw from a convergence of the fields of multiculturalism and global education that will help us derive a new theoretical understanding of cross-cultural interaction? (3) What knowledge, skills and dispositions comprise the essential components of this synthesis? and (4) How can this theory and these components be taught, practiced, and measured? The paper identifies six characteristics of transcultural universalism: cross-cultural adaptability, geographical global awareness, contextual global awareness, empathetic activism, shared values, and trans-cultural awareness. It also presents a model for transcultural universalism, and reports on a study of the effectiveness of combining certain teaching techniques with selected content for student attainment of key characteristics of transcultural/universal citizenship. Contains 3 figures and a 38-item working bibliography. (BT)

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Beyond Multiculturalism: Towards a Unification Theory for the Improvement of Cross-Cultural Communication

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presented by

Professor Steve Jongewaard
Education Department
Hamline University
St. Paul Minnesota

ph: (651) 523-2434; fax: (651) 523-3170

e-mail: sjongewaard@gw.hamline.edu

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Steven M. Jongewaard

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1

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Great Lakes Regional Session Abstract

Participants will learn about an emerging unification theory of multiculturalism and global education called *transcultural universalism*. Participants will learn about the theoretical underpinnings of the study, be able to describe the research design, list the six stages of the unification theory, discuss statistical results of the most-recent phase of the project and contemplate classroom applications for the improvement of cross-cultural communication.

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The Problem

It is postulated as a major premise of this paper that a *universal citizenship profile* cannot be fully formed without a complete interaction of the stages and dimensions suggested below, and further, that much of our current work in multicultural studies and citizenship education traps us in any number of incomplete stages, yielding poorly formed universal citizenship profiles that inadequately equip us for successful cross-cultural interaction on the global stage. Four questions are addressed in this presentation. First, what key citizenship characteristics are essential for today's highly diverse, complex classrooms? Second, what can we draw from a convergence of the fields of multiculturalism and global education that will help us derive a new theoretical understanding of cross-cultural interaction? Third, what knowledge, skills and dispositions comprise the essential components of this synthesis? Finally, how can this theory and these components be taught, practiced and measured?

Background

Much discussion and study in the field of social studies education in the past decade has focused on the need for developing a better understanding of the principles of *multiculturalism*. Various models have been promoted, ranging from the deficits models of power, oppression and difference to assets models based on the anthropological concepts of cultural universals and global citizenship. Indeed, both are essential to a full and complete understanding of oneself in relation to others. Recent work in the field of *global citizenship* such as Hahn's comparative study of citizenship education (1998), Cogan's recent cross-national study of citizenship characteristics (1998), Merryfield's synthesis of global education and multiculturalism (1996, 2000), Parker's discussion of democracy and difference (1997), and the literature of intercultural or cross-cultural communication, among others, yield new

insights into an approach I call *transcultural universalism.* It is the purpose of the project being reported here to explore the essential characteristics of this new synthesis, and to describe an emerging unification theory that can be used to frame the exploration of these insights as they relate to K-12 social studies instruction.

The Present Context

For the past several years, I have been experimenting with a combined elementary and secondary social studies methods course. The primary purpose of the course is to promote an approach to K-12 curriculum development that draws on the ten NCSS integrative, thematic strands and incorporates Minnesota's new pre-service, social studies outcomes standards. The course is structured to engage students in pedagogical approaches to concept development that facilitate the learning and application of key indicators of *transcultural universalism.* The universal citizenship characteristics addressed in this investigation are derived in part from the literature on cross-cultural communication (e.g. Bennet, 1998; Brislin, 1986; Kelly and Meyers, 1995; Kohls, 1996; Paige, 1992; Singer, 1998; Seeyle, Weeks, et al., 1994), the field of global education (Anderson, 1979; Barrows, 1981; Becker, 1979; Corbitt, 1998; Diaz, 1999; Kneip, 1987; Kobus, 1983; Pike, Graham and Selby, 1988; Shames, 1997) and citizenship education (Cogan, 1998, 2000; Hahn, 1998; Kubow, 1997; Parker, 1997). It is my perception that the field of cross-cultural communication has been largely overlooked by social studies theorists engaged in the development of the fields of multiculturalism and global education, and that the concepts and skills of cross-cultural communication represent a missing link in our evolution towards the emergence of a set of citizenship characteristics necessary for life in the 21st century.

Characteristics of Universalism

This exploration of sources focusing on cross-cultural communication and citizenship characteristics yields a set of six cultural universals that form the basis for this study. Effective global citizens will have a working knowledge of these categories and will have an awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses relative to these effectiveness characteristics. Further, teachers trained in these areas will have the knowledge and skills to teach their own students about the universals that unite us all, despite our many differences. The six traits being developed and tested in this study are as follows:

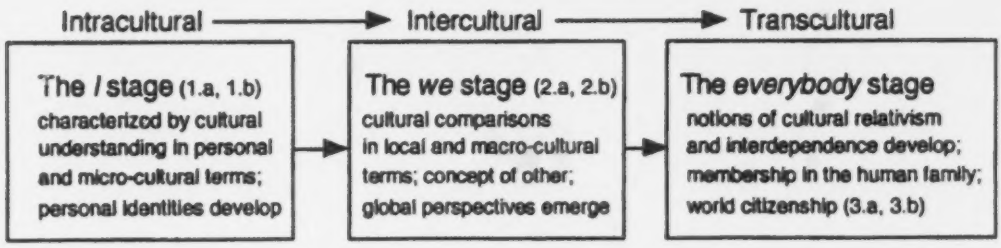
Figure 1 Characteristics of Transcultural Universalism

1. Cross-Cultural Adaptability 2. Geographical Global Awareness 3. Contextual Global Awareness	4. Empathetic Activism 5. Shared Values 6. Trans-Cultural Awareness

Towards a Unification Theory Model

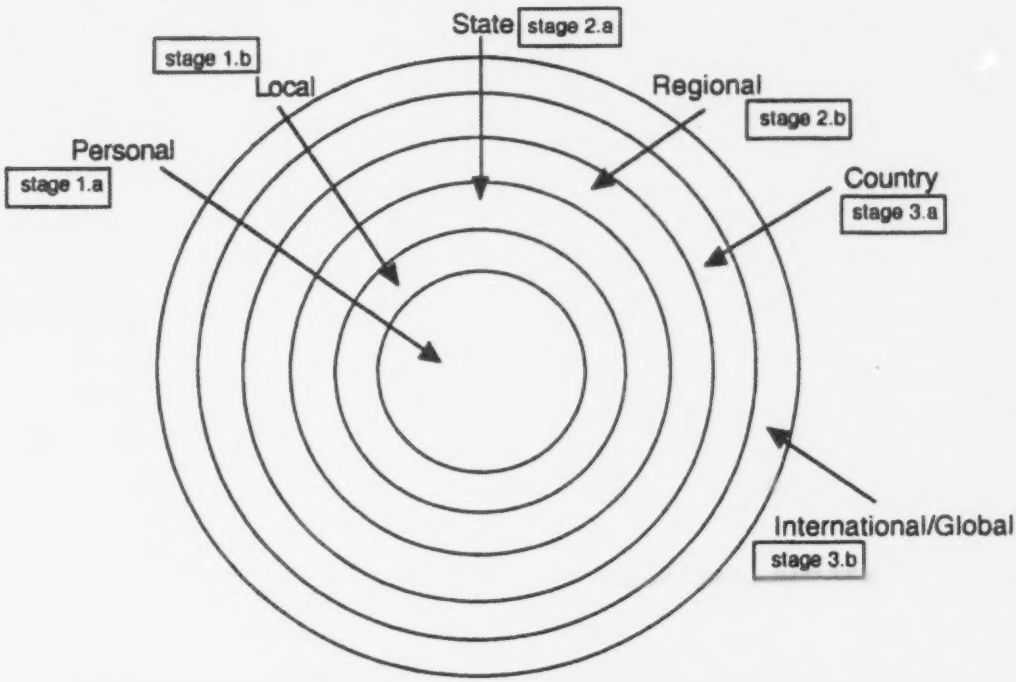
Borrowing from Paul Hanna's work in the 1930's on developmental stages in social studies education (the result of which was our first take on the so-called concentric circles or expanding horizons curriculum design), I have begun working on a theoretical model for transcultural universalism that incorporates a three-stage developmental sequence within a six-level "perspectives" framework. First, the three-part developmental model recognizes a natural progression of necessary stages in one's journey to transcultural understanding, as follows:

Figure 2 Developmental Stages in Transcultural Competence


Intracultural
Intercultural
Transcultural
The *I* stage (1.a, 1.b) characterized by cultural understanding in personal and micro-cultural terms; personal identities develop
The *we* stage (2.a, 2.b) cultural comparisons in local and macro-cultural terms; concept of other; global perspectives emerge
The *everybody* stage notions of cultural relativism and interdependence develop; membership in the human family; world citizenship (3.a, 3.b)

Next, the six-level perspectives framework is depicted simply as a set of concentric circles:

Figure 3 Transcultural Perspectives



In combination, the two models depict a set of developmental stages and environmental interactions that are essential to reaching the level of cross-cultural competence I call *transcultural universalism*. For example, a person at stage 3.b would be one who has attained a global perspective complete with a global understanding of cultural relativism and a working knowledge of those transcultural characteristics

and skills essential to effective and consistent cross-cultural communication.

The Study

The study being reported here is an investigation of the effectiveness of combining certain teaching techniques with selected content for student attainment of key characteristics of transcultural/universal citizenship. Students are tested on two measures of universal citizenship, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (Kelly and Meyers, 1995) and the Global Awareness Profile (Corbitt, 1998). In addition to pre- and post-test sessions for each of these primary instruments, a follow-up questionnaire adapted from Barrows (1981) and Hahn (1998) is administered. A first round of these assessments was administered during Fall Semester, 1999 to a group of elementary and secondary social studies students. A second round of the instruments was used in the Summer Session, 2000 section of the course. A third round, including the two foillow-up questionnaires, was conducted in Fall, 2000. A final round of instruction and assessment from Summer 2001 and Fall 2001 will be included in the report at the November 2001 CUFA conference.

Interpretation and Discussion of Results

The two primary means of measurement employed in this study were the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Index (CCAI) and the Global Awareness Profile (GAP). With the CCAI, students develop scores on four dimensions of cross-cultural adaptability: 1) emotional resilience (ER), 2) flexibility/openness (FO), perceptual acuity (PAC), and personal autonomy (PA). Student scores were grouped four ways for comparison of means: 1) male, 2) female, 3) elementary, and 4) secondary. The GAP tests students on thirteen global awareness variables representing common knowledge from six geographic regions, six life-context areas and one area of general global concerns.

Hamline students scored consistently higher on the CCAI compared to the normed data supplied by the test developers. It is speculated that two factors account for these differences. First, Hamline students are studying content related to what the instrument is measuring. Second, Hamline's rigorous liberal arts curriculum draws a particularly capable student. Some potentially significant differences are noted between males and females in the Hamline cohort with women generally scoring lower on the pre-test but showing greater gains on the post-test such that post-test scores are virtually equal in both groups. In contrast, the normative samples show females scoring generally higher than males. It is hypothesized that male Hamline students, mostly secondary social studies licensure candidates, enjoy a knowledge base advantage because of their focused study in social science content areas, particularly history and geography, thus accounting for their higher pre-test scores.

Pre-test scores on the GAP tend to be higher for males and secondary licensure candidates. Again, this pattern can likely be attributed to the fact that secondary licensure students have more content knowledge in the various social sciences, and most of them are males. This male/secondary scoring advantage tends to hold up through the post-test, although all students show potentially significant score increases across all thirteen variables.

Fall semester 2000 pre/post data is currently being analyzed using matched pairs t-tests for both instruments to determine statistical significance. In addition, baseline means have been established for the two questionnaires: 1) Assessment of World Issues Questionnaire and 2) Universal Citizenship Opinion Survey. This data will be used for comparative analysis of the next round of data gathering in Fall Semester 2001.

Summary

This study is focused primarily on the development of a unification theory of cross-cultural competence called trancultural universalism. The study described above uses instructional materials, assignments and activities, including urban public school classroom experiences, to help social studies teachers develop the knowledge, skills and habits of mind essential to effective universal citizenship. This combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes leads to a final stage of global multicultural awareness known as transcultural universalism.

More work needs to be done. Data analysis to date suggests the need for more content knowledge in the elementary licensure sequence. The potential gender gap, based primarily on the historical pattern of a preponderance of men in secondary social studies with more women pursuing elementary licensure, is worth noting. Which course content, assignments and activities will maximize the development of transcultural traits has yet to be correlated beyond the anecdotal level. How pre-service teachers can translate this learning into curriculum opportunities for their future students is yet another important avenue to explore. A follow-up investigation of students' cross-cultural interactions could provide the final component in the chain of components necessary to insure a pattern of defined, taught, practiced and measured knowledge and skills essential to effective cross-cultural communication.

The Six Characteristics of Universal Citizenship: Working Bibliography
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Compiled by Steven Jongewaard, Ph.D.
(651) 523-2434; sjongewaard@gw.hamline.edu